

Interviewee: Richard Kiely

Newtown

Interviewer: Ruth Guiry Cagney

17<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Richard: no more lies now right (to family)

\*laughing\*

Ruth: now, it's the 17th May 2017, and I'm here with Richard Kiely in Newtown. Oops, thanks  
Richard, ok, so, do you want to start at the start and maybe, you said you did fishing, and you did reed cutting.

Richard: ya, fishing and reed cutting

Ruth: ya, ok, so do you want to tell me how you got involved with them, and when you started?

Richard: ammm, \*sigh\*, I started cutting reed as a young fella, just messing around going, going down to the trenches where the reed was going and cutting it like,

Ruth: ok, and where are the trenches here, you looked this way...

Richard: they, they would be down, just down across the fields from here

Ruth: so you were very near

Richard: oh I would be ya, now these wouldn't be the reed beds, these are just trenches that would have reed growing out of them

Ruth: ok

Richard: where the reed beds, would be further down onto the banks of the Shannon

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: and, ammm, was there a reason you were cutting reeds?

Richard: just, to make, kind of, houses out of it for ourselves

Ruth: ya, ya, for thatching and all that?

Richard: no, no,

Ruth: no?

Richard: no, no, just some place to play, you play inside there

Ruth: ooohhhh, for playing? ok, very good, and is there anyone here that used to do thatching then, or was there basket making or anything?

Richard: am, not, no, not, they only person that, would be my mate Tommy Roberts,

Ruth: right

Richard: and he is now a thatcher

Ruth: ok

Richard: so, he, the two of us used to go down and we cut the reed below and, then we'd bring it up, and we'd make it up, and you'd broke, he had a broken down shed up in his yard

Ruth: right

Richard: and we used to cover it over, and that, you know

Ruth: and play away then

Richard: and play away then ya

Ruth: and, and how would you cut the reeds then?

Richard: we'd get, we had reed hooks

Ruth: right?

Richard: and we used to cut the reed with the reed hooks

Ruth: and are they just...a hook shape?

Richard: they, they are just, they are just a shape, ya they are shaped, in a, semi-circle and a handle coming down off it

Ruth: ok, and you just grab them and...?

Richard: you grab the reeds, ya, maybe, up, a foot and a half from the bottom and then you just trim it down maybe, ten inches off the ground, you know

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know, we used to have to cut it a small bit higher because we were small, so,

Ruth: ya, yeah

Richard: we would have to try and carry them across the field \*laughs\*

Ruth: very good, ok,

Richard: ya, ya

Ruth: and did you go in, did you then go on, we will just stick with reed cutting for a second, sorry, did you go on afterwards to do anything with reeds or?

Richard: ya, I started cutting reed later on then when I got older

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know, I started cutting reed in, the mid-eighties,

Ruth: ok

Richard: I started cutting reed, I used to cut, cut reed over in Bunratty

Ruth: ok

Richard: and draw it over to our own side (or site?) here, and ah, used to, used to cut it on our own side of the river here, on the south, on the south bank,

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: and what did you use that reed for?

Richard: the reed was, I actually sold it, I used to sell it to a mate of mine who, thatching houses,

Ruth: very good, ok

2.25mins Richard: (unclear) you know

Ruth: so, then, you were just supplying then basically?

Richard: just supplying ya ya, supplying you know

Ruth: ok, and did you get involved in fishing?

Richard: I kind of got in fishing, to be ammm, as a young fella, I'd go out on, on the boats with the older men,

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know, so, it went on from there really you know

Ruth: ok, and what age were you roughly when you started doing that?

Richard: I'd say I was about 15

Ruth: so, you were very young

Richard: I was only about 15 when started going out on the boat,

Ruth: and where did you used to go out?

Richard: we used to fish out of what we call Sandy, which would be, ah, a kind of a dug-out, boat, boat deck that we had

Ruth: back here is it?

Richard: absent back the road here, ya ya

Ruth: right, I'll write that down, so, just on record, we're not far from the Shannon here, so we're not?

Richard: no no no

Ruth: no, ok, very good, and, ammm, when you say you went out with the older men, were they family or?

Richard: no, they wouldn't have been family no, no, they, at, they would probably be, we'd say they would have been friends of my fathers

Ruth: ummm

Richard: do you know that kind of way

Ruth: ok

Richard: because my father would have gone down and fished, some parts of the season with these men you know what I mean

Ruth: ya ya

Richard: if they were stuck for crew men, so they just, I was kind of brought along there, for, and then after a while, I, I was, I became full time, you know \*laughs\*

Ruth: ya, ya, ya, so when you say full time, were you, were you full time, with the fishing season?

Richard: ya, I'd be full time...

Ruth: ya

Richard: ...with the fishing season ya

Ruth: ok and then you did something else in your off season then?

Richard: in my off season then I would ya, I, I, I, I'm as fitter by trade

\*door creaks\*

Ruth: right, ok, so that's what you were doing

Richard: you know so, you know I was going to school at the time so

Ruth: ya, you were very young

Richard: make a few bob, and that,

Ruth: ya

\*door creaks\*

Richard: you know what I mean so, id have been, I suppose, what was I, fifteen? kind of ya, fifteen, somewhere in the fifteen to eighteen age group, the reed and the fishing kind of came to work then to each other

Ruth: ok

Richard: ya know

Ruth: right, ok, and, you said your dad went fishing as well, was he a fisherman? or?

Richard: he used to, ya, he'd ah, he'd have fished tides down there now, he wouldn't have been kind of, he, he wouldn't, have put, put in the same time as I did, once I got going

Ruth: uh-hum

\*door creaks\*

Richard: but he would have been crewing on boats

\*door creaks\*

Richard: down there on, on the tides

Ruth: very good, ok

\*door bangs\*

Ruth: and, when you say he was fishing on the tides, he used to go out with... drift nets, or?

Richard: ya, I, I would, myself, would am, would have fish draft, and drift,

Ruth: right

Richard: right, and, I, I ended up...

Ruth: what's the difference sorry Richard...

Richard: the draft would be what we call, they, they, what would be classed as shoring, what we call locally, shoring,

Ruth: right

Richard: that you'd have one man on the mud, holding the rope, and the other man then would pull out with the net on the boat and it would fall off as he was going out and you'd make a ring,

Ruth: right

Richard: you know

Ruth: ok

Richard: and as soon as the pole outside at the boat end, hit the water then, you use to turn, the boat would turn back in and make a ring around (\*scribbling\*) the fish

Ruth: right, okay

Richard: you know

Ruth: right, okay, and then what was drift...that was drift?...

Richard: the drift then would be, where the lads would be, they'd pull out more into the middle of the river and start throwing their net outside, and work their way back in towards the shore, stretching their net.

Ruth: okay, that's very interesting, And what...am...so there was how many men on the draft and how many on the drift?

Richard: you could have, sometimes there could be, be three people on the draft

Ruth: ok

Richard: and, the drift was normally two

Ruth: normally two

Richard: ya,

Ruth: ok, and where, am, ok, and what kind of fish did you catch Richard, sorry?

Richard: Salmon, Salmon

Ruth; salmon!

Richard: Salmon

Ruth: salmon, every, there is nothing...

Richard: ah, you'd have got flat fish down there, flounder,

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: so, it's just mainly salmon though, is it?

5.32mins Richard: oh, it is ya, it is

Ruth: ok, and am, where were ye supplying the salmon too? or was it for home use? or?

Richard: you'd, we would have ammm, private, private orders

Ruth: right

Richard: and, I'd have supplied fish to, am, Cruise's Hotel,

Ruth: oh, go away! In Limerick?

Richard: inside in Limerick ya

Ruth: ok

Richard: the Woodlands,

Ruth: uh-hum

Richard: and, the Dunraven

Ruth: so a lot of local places, a load of local hotels, ya

Richard: ya, ya, ya would do a lot of local hotels, ya

Ruth: and do ye still supply, Richard, or?

Richard: well the fishing is, well...

Ruth: it's done is it?

Richard: its finished, well, we were put off due to con, ah, conservation,

Ruth: right

Richard: was the reason, you know, but, they offered a compensation package for those who go, and, there was a lot of the people in Newtown, and the surrounding area of Newtown, that didn't take the compensation,

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know what I mean, we decided that it was a case of am, we'd like to hold onto our fishing rights

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: so, can you explain that to me, you were offered compensation and you didn't take it because you wanted to keep...

Richard: we wanted to keep the, our fishing alive,

Ruth: right

Richard: even if it was on the basis of, maybe, a heritage licence, that you could go out, and maybe, maybe ten fish in a season

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: just to keep it alive

Ruth, ya, ya, ya definitely

Richard: so they could keep the tra-tra-tradition going in the area you know

6.48mins Ruth: and did it happen, did you get the licence?

Richard: no, we didn't know, we didn't ammm, they, they wouldn't allow that to happen, so, we actually, had a protest on the river,

Ruth: brilliant, ya

Richard: and ah, to, to, to highlight our, our, our cause,

Ruth: and when was this Richard, sorry now? just trying to get a picture

Richard: I think it was around 2008 or 9,

Ruth: right

Richard: when that protest, and, we ended up in court anyway, in Ennis,

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: ah, over it, and were fined, for, for fishing, without a licence

Ruth: were you?

Richard: ya ya ya ya

Ruth: oh my god, ok

Richard: you know, now, in fairness to the judge at the time like, he amm, he did see it as a protest but at the same time he had to uphold the law.

Ruth: right

Richard: you know

Ruth: it's tough isn't it?

Richard: it is really because you know, the younger people, that's, I got into it as a young fella been shown by by by by the older men, like you know and it would be nice for to pass that on,

Ruth: oh definitely ya

Richard: do you know what I mean so that's one thing that we are kind of, we are saddened over it really you know

Ruth: ya

Richard: ya ya

Ruth: and when did the conservation start coming in?

Richard: 2006 was our last season fishing,

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: ammm, and 2007 then, they, ah, they stopped it, due to their saying stocks were diminishing

Ruth: right

Richard: you know, so

Ruth: and do you think that was the case or?

Richard: well it seems to be now that the stocks, it's even worst it has got for whatever reason they make out that there is something at sea now that's causing, that's, that's the problem,

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know, because you have all the, al the, trawlers, that were out at sea, are gone off it as well

Ruth: right ok

Richard: you know, and the, there were 98 licences in total, on the Shannon, and the mouth of the Shannon, which would have included a couple of ammm, half deckers, out of the like of ah, Carrigaholt

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: and that you know, Kilkee, so, you know, for whatever reason their saying the stocks, it actually worst it's got like

Ruth: right, ok, and where would ye fish down along as far as then?

Richard: ah, I would have, the furthest down I would have fished would have been down as far as Saints Island, which would be, what, 3 miles down, 3 miles down from here, 3 to 4 miles down, be down near Shannon Airport,

Ruth: right, right ok. And it was mainly salmon you were catching, you were saying, ok, and Richard, in terms of boats, where, have you got boats, or did ye hire boats, or how did that work?

Richard: they were traditional fishing boats, gandalows

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know, they evolved here on the Shannon,

Ruth: say that again?

Richard: they evolved on the Shannon

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: over time like, they were flat bottomed boat

Ruth: ya

Richard: you know

Ruth: and where did ye get them?

Richard: ah, there was some of them, they were made locally

Ruth: ok, do you who made them or?

Richard: there was a man up the road here in Newtown, Peter Byrnes,

Ruth: Peter, right ok

Richard: ya, ya

Ruth: and is there anyone still around that has them, or, are they all just gone now?

Richard: no I have one

Ruth: you have one?

Richard: I had one ya. there's still, there's, there's am, let me see now, four or five left around,

Ruth: right ok

Richard: ya ya ya..., what we have is actually, we formed a rowing club behind at the... the Ferrybridge there, a couple years ago,

Ruth: right

Richard: and its for, for, teaching people, how to

Ruth: that's very good isn't it

Richard: row traditional boats ya ya

Ruth: ok. and is there many going to that

Richard: there is about 15, 20 members at the moment

Ruth: that's very good isn't it

Richard: were trying to

Ruth: it's nice to keep it alive though

Richard: we are ya, our problem is our boats are old now and we are trying to get, trying to get money together to build

Ruth: funding

Richard: new boats so we can you know

Ruth: ya, very good, ok

Richard: keep the tradition alive

Ruth: ok, ammm, what else will I ask Richard, ammm, ok, so you went out fishing with your dad and everything, what used you do when you were out fishing with the lads? you started off doing what exactly and then...

Richard: well, I started fishing with them first of all, you'd be left in the boat just to watch what was going on

Ruth: um hum

Richard: you know, and am, after a while then you would be put out onto the shore to hold the, the, shore end rope

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: of the net, you know, so that, you go down what we call a draw. You hold the rope, you might travel down about 100 metres, and then the boat would swing in again, and then you would, when the boat would come in, into, into the shore, the boat, the boatman, and yourself then, would start hauling the net in

Ruth: right

Richard: at opposite ends, and and close the net in around the fish

Ruth: I get you, ok, sounds like tough work, tough work

Richard: oh ya, ooh ya, ya ya ya

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: its hard on the, the, you know the mud would soft down there you know

Ruth: ya

Richard: and am, good strong tide then and you would be constantly trying to fight to get the net in

Ruth: I can imagine ya

Richard: you know

Ruth: and, amm, how many fish, Richard, would ye be catching at the time?

Richard: oh god, you could, phew, my first season down there, I spent six weeks without a fish

Ruth: ok!

Richard: and, things started to come a bit right then you might be getting eights and nines, on a tide

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: when you say, on a tide, what do you mean

Richard: on a tide, you'd go down we'd say, low water was at 6 o'clock in the morning, you'd fish that away then 'till, 'till, probably 10 o'clock,

Ruth: ok...

Richard: we'd say, that, that morning, and then you would go back down again, for the coming tide again the following, on the low tide you know

Ruth: ok, right

Richard: you know, that's how we do it

Ruth: ok, and it started to deplete after that then? when do you think that started happening?

Richard: the stocks dropping?

Ruth: ya

Richard: amm, now, listening to the older fishermen, they maintained when, they could, they gave out licences, out at the mouth of the Shannon, I think it was in the '70s, and ever since then, they maintain the stocks were dropping,

Ruth: since the '70's, ok

Richard: ya ya ya

Ruth: and did you have a licence Richard, you did?

Richard: I did ya

Ruth: ya and how did you get yours?

Richard: I got my licence from the man I fish with,

Ruth: right

Richard: a man by the name of Joe Skerrett

Ruth: ok

Richard: id fish with him for a number of years, and when he passed on, I applied for the licence and got it, I was, I was a nominee on the licence,

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: that's a nice honour isn't it

Richard: ummm

Ruth; ya

Richard: you know

Ruth: and do you still have your licence or is it gone now?

Richard: well you see, on account of, the banning the fishing on the river, they're not issuing us with licences,

Ruth: ummm

Richard: even though I haven't taken a compensation, so as far as I'm concerned, if and when the licences come back on again,

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: that I'm entitled, to a licence

Ruth: ya

Richard: straight off

Ruth: perfect, ya

Richard: you know, because I didn't take any compensation

Ruth: ok

Richard: or I didn't take the buy out like you know

Ruth: right ok

Richard: you know, so, if and when...

Ruth: Well hopefully something will happen there

Richard: well, you never know like, like you know like as I said

Ruth: well it would be horrible to see the trade die, would...

Richard: well, you see, that, this is the thing like you know

Ruth: right

Richard: your dealing with a state body there like and, they are calling the shots on it

Ruth: ya

Richard: you know, but as I say, the tradition of it alone like, we tried, to see if we could be issued a heritage licence, but there is a lot of politics involved in that and a lot of you know, and I don't think that they were willing to go that route, you know

Ruth: no? ok, and do you remember Richard if there was many women involved?

Richard: not too many women no

Ruth: ok

Richard: not too many women, ahhhh, there is a local man by the name of Aidan O'Brien,

Ruth: right

Richard: and his wife, would have fished with him,

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: am, good woman on the set of paddles,

Ruth: oh go 'way,

Richard: yeah!

Ruth: tough \*laughs\*

Richard: ya, good woman on a set of paddles

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: and, do you remember anything about the water bailiffs?

Richard: ya, they would ya, they'd be around from time to time

Ruth: right ok, and, did they just patrol up along or...

Richard: they would patrol, they call, they would actually come into us and just check to see, if we had any fish, ammm, if you were a licence holder, or nor, or a nominee on the licence,

Ruth: right

Richard: you know, so that am, if you weren't a nominee or whatever, you know, because, for all they knew, somebody else could be taking out your, your, fishing net

Ruth: or your boat?

Richard: without your permission like you know, your fishing gear,

Ruth: ya

Richard: like you know, but the, they, it's their job to do come down and just check they licences, if you had fish, what they do at times, is they just take a scrapping off it, the fish or the scales,

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: and they were able to take those away, get them, analysed, whatever, testing, they were doing to see

Ruth: right. you're the first person to mention that now

Richard: ya, there would be kind of genetics, you know

Ruth: right ok

15.26mins

Ruth: they see kind of tough don't they

Richard: hmmm?

Ruth: these bailiffs, seem kind of tough,

Richard: mmm

Ruth: ya

\*laughing\*

Ruth: ya, ok, ammm, ok, (unclear) and was there any, just back to the reeds for one second, was there any harvest season for the reeds or did they grow all year round?

Richard: ya the reeds, I, id normally go, start cutting the reeds, when the leaves would start to fall off it,

Ruth: oooh, ok

Richard: am, the reason for that is, a lot of thatchers don't like the leaf on it,

Ruth: right

Richard: its, its extra weight for when your cutting it and hauling it as well you know

Ruth: right ok

Richard: so, it's better when its cleaner

Ruth: I didn't know that now

Richard: ya, ya, its better when its cleaner, you know

Ruth: ok, and you said, sorry, a while ago you said there was a trench and then there was a sally bed, is that was you called it?

Richard: you had the trenches, that lead down, there would be courses, and they lead down, in, on to slouches, which would exit out onto, onto the Shannon,

Ruth: right

Richard: and you, had, reeds, reeds growing inside in those, whereas the reeds beds, they would be outside the banks of the Shannon, where the reed beds would be you know

Ruth: right ok

Richard: and am, that's where you cut all the, the reeds you know

Ruth: ok

Richard: what we wanted as children, there, we got it, got it on the

Ruth: ya you got it on the trench

Richard: trenches

Ruth: ok very good. Another question here is have fish sizes changed?

Richard: have they changed?

Ruth: ya?

Richard: they would have got a bit smaller ya

Ruth: really?

Richard: ya, they would have got a bit smaller you know, am, normally, with a good run of fish you'd be getting salmon anywhere between, pale is salmon now, right

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: and they, they would be anywhere between, 5 and a half, maybe, ten twelve pounds weight, and, and an odd time, you might get a big fish of sixteen, or eighteen pounds weight

Ruth: go 'way, right

17.15mins Richard: you know, but they seem to be gone down to four and a half, five pound fish, for some reason,

Ruth: right

Richard: you know, it's like if they were being sixes coming through, coming up the (unclear)  
\*laugh\*

Ruth: right \*laughs\*ok, right, am, just while we are on about fish, have you ever heard of a pollan?

Richard: a pollan?

Ruth: ya

Richard: not that I can think

Ruth: that's ok, ya, were trying to find out if, for another lady, if, if there was such a thing but were not sure

Richard: ah, is, is that meant to be a fish?

Ruth: ya, ya, its meant to be like a salmon, but not quite, but ya

Richard: right

Ruth: only one, only come across one gentleman that has heard of it but,

Richard: ya, ya, no, no, an odd time we might got an ah, a brown trout, I got, a brown trout, in the river now

Ruth: right ok

Richard: ammm, then you would have these small little fellas, and for all the world, smelt their called, and they have teeth on them, and their like Parana's,

Ruth: oh, go 'way

Richard: ya ya ya ya

Ruth: ok, and how small were they, just?

Richard: they could be, four to five inches long

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know, but there was a smell off them, and their teeth...were like needles

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know. Good for pike I believe, catching pike

Ruth: ya?

Richard: ummmm

Ruth: ok, and what's pike now? another type of fish?

Richard: pike, pike would be a course water fish

Ruth: right

Richard: you know, a lot, a lot of them are in lakes and canals and things like that you know

Ruth: ok, and did you ever fish anywhere else bar here, Richard, or?

Richard: am, I would have fished the River Maigue,

Ruth: right

Richard: the draft net licence, or the shore licence, entitles you to fish the River Maigue,

Ruth: ok

Richard: ya, ya

Ruth: ok, very good, ammm, ok and what did you wear going out, just your, what gear did you take with you?

Richard: ah, normally what you'd have is just, in the line of clothing?

Ruth: ya

Richard: ya, rubber boots, or especially with the shoring, that often, you'd, you'd, you'd wear waders

Ruth: ya...

Richard: ummm, you'd carry ice skins with you for, for, for wet days, and all

Ruth: go 'way, right ok

Richard: you know

19.18mins Ruth: ok, ammm, and, Richard, the longest you were gone on the boat would be how long?

Richard: the longest, I done, would have been twenty hours a day

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: ya

Ruth: you were never gone for overnight, or anything, so you just take your packed lunch and stuff?

Richard: take your lunch with you and that ya ya ya

Ruth: ok, and, ammm...

Richard: see, if there's fish running, you'd, you'd, you'd keep fishing away...

Ruth: you'd keep ya...

Richard: while they're, while their running you know

Ruth: and did ye stick with the fishing season from February, is it, onwards?

Richard: ya, ammm, when I started now, I think the season was gone to Paddy's Day, St. Patrick's Day onwards

Ruth: right

Richard: ammm, until, the, I think it was the 19th July,

Ruth: ok

Richard: until they shortened it again then, from May, to, to the end of July,

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: and, did ye pick spots on the river, were ye allocated spots or how did that work?

Richard: no, no, there was, what did they called, ammm, for was the drift boats, there was what they call drifts, they were, areas, on the river that, we'd say that, you could have a group of boats meet up, one man would go off on the travel so far, and there was marks, that could be seen from where, where the boats were gathered,

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: and you'd get an idea, how far off he was, and when, you'd see there could be three over on the Clare side

Ruth: right

Richard: and once he'd pass that, the next man would go off then on his stretch

Ruth: right

Richard: you know, so, there was no point in, in, one following the other directly,

Ruth: no, it wouldn't make sense

Richard: because, he was, he was blocking you

Ruth: uh hum

Richard: anything, fish were coming up the river see, so if he goes down ahead of you, he's it cut off,

Ruth: ok...

Richard: so, until he kind of got out of the way, then you got your turn to

Ruth: brilliant, ok

Richard: you know, and something similar with the, the draws were for something similar, only they were shorter distances because you had men walking the mud, which was tough going like

Ruth: ya

\*unusual sweeping noise\*

Richard: you know, so, you might walk, maybe a hundred yards and then come in,

Ruth: ok

Richard: and as soon as you came in then, the next man, back at the head of the draw, he'd go out, and he'd go, on his draw, and he'd come in,

Ruth: ok

Richard: you know, and you'd be working your way back to there, while he was gathering his net, or taking the fish out of it or whatever the case may be you know

Ruth: ok, perfect

Richard: so ya ya

Ruth: and how did ye store the fish then?

Richard: what we used to do with the fish is, we'd, we'd lay them on the floor of the boat, you'd put in water into the floor of the boat, especially of a warm day, you'd throw in a drop of water there, and you'd keep them covered with, with ammm, course bags you know

Ruth: ok

Richard: which would be like old canvas bags or

Ruth: like sacks, is it?

Richard: ya, you'd dampen them, so that, that, that they'd keep the fish, moisture ya ya

Ruth: right ok, and for bait then what did you use?

Richard: well, we...

Ruth: ye didn't do any rod fishing

Richard: no

Ruth: just net

Richard: no it was just nets

22.09mins ok, perfect, alright. Ok, ammm...(\*papers shuffling\*) is there anything else you'd like to add Richard, is there anything else you can think of, have you any memories of our father fishing or?

Richard: no I actually never fished with father

Ruth: you never did?

Richard: not, no, no, I, I, I would have got into the boats, I would have fished with the men that he would have fished with,

Ruth: right, have you, do you want to mention who they are?

Richard: well, the people I, I fished with, would have been the Skerritts, that's where I got the orig, the licence originally, (unclear) Joe Skerritt, and my father and Joe's son would have fished together and they would have been around the one age, so they

Ruth: right ok...

Richard: they, they would have fished together there,

Ruth: ok

Richard: for a few years aw well like you know

Ruth: very good, and have you any memories of fishing with Joe?

Richard: oh I have loads of them ya

Ruth: ya, anything you'd like to share?

Richard: well Joe, he'd collect me, here,

Ruth: ya

Richard: and ammm, we'd head away back, and from the time that I got in to the car with him, till the time, we came back from our fishing, he'd only light one fag, and he'd keep driving

\*Ruth laughs\*

Richard: he'd light one fag, and he'd, time, and he'd smoke away, the whole time

Ruth: right

Richard: right through till we came back again

Ruth: I don't know how he kept that going \*laughs\* ok

Richard: I dunno, but am, no, I enjoyed I enjoyed fishing with him, in fairness now you know

Ruth: ya

Richard: he taught me a lot like, now we had tough days down there like you know

Ruth: ummm

Richard: but he was, you know, he was, stone made about fishing

Ruth: loved it?

Richard: ya ya, even as I believe, as a young man, he came from Ennistymon originally

Ruth: ummm

Richard: even as a young man, he'd cycle half the country with a fishing rod fishing

Ruth: right ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: and what age was he when he was training you how to fish

Richard: oh Jesus, I'd say he was what, in his sixties

Ruth: ok

Richard: sixties, ya, ya, in his sixties

Ruth: very good ok

Richard: you know

Ruth: and did ye have nicknames down here Richard?

Richard: did we have nicknames?

Ruth: ya? a lot of the fishermen in town had nicknames, but,

Richard: ya, ya, we would a few alright, I just, am,

Ruth: not for fishing, is it?

Richard: hmmm

Ruth: not for fishing?

Richard: ah, we'd have, em, for fishing alright,

\*Ruth tries not to laugh\*

Ruth: ok

Richard: do you know, you have different, they'd be short names given to people or if their name was whatever you might shorten it someway or whatever

Ruth: ya, ok

Richard: ya ya ya

Ruth: alright ok, ammm, I think that's kind of it, ammm,

Richard: ya, i'd say I spent most of life on the river like you know, we used to do a lot of wild fowling when I was younger like we'd say

Ruth: you used to go to what?

Richard: wild fowling (?) this area was very, lots of duck and geese, and pheasants,

Ruth: right, ok

Richard: you know and, since I was, six years of age, I was following my father around the fields,

Ruth: ya

Richard: you know, as I got older then I got into the fishing, and that, and then, I worked for the Harbour for 11 years, on the Dredger,

Ruth: ok

Richard: ammmm, working out at, at, the the docks in Limerick,

Ruth: very good. And when did you start there?

Richard: I started there in '98,

Ruth: ok, so, you're a man for the sea

Richard: ya, ya, ya, you know, as I say, I worked on the Dredger up to the Curragower, and the Lodge (?), the Greg (?)

Ruth: right

Richard: and, am, at this present point in time, I've 21 years done with the Naval Service Reserve, so, go ya, go to sea with the Navy

Ruth: very good, ok

Richard: you know so,

Ruth: 21 years, oh my god! \*scribbling\* ok, that's amazing. Thank you, Richard, I think that's kind of it, I can't think of anything else to ask you, am, ya, we thatch, we spoke about the thatchers and everything, ok, ammm, if, I need anything else, is it ok to come back down to you?

Richard: ya no bother no bother

Ruth: thank you Richard

Richard: no bother

Ruth: thanks a million

END